

ABSTRACT

A method for provisioning users with resources is disclosed. The method includes the steps of establishing a set of attributes, organizational information, and user roles and defining a plurality of resource provisioning policies based on selected attributes, organizational information, and user roles. The method also includes the steps of receiving attribute information and user role information for a particular user or resource, determining which resource provisioning policies are applicable to the user based on the received user role information, organizational information, and attribute information, seeking additional information or authorizations from third parties in accordance with the applicable resource provisioning policies, and provisioning the user with the resources specified by the applicable resource provisioning policies if all necessary additional information or authorizations have been received from the third parties. The resources to be provisioned include "hard" resources as well as "soft" resources. "Soft" resources may include e-mail and voice mail accounts, application programs, databases, files, folders, the Internet, Web pages, organizational Intranets, messages to third parties, digital certificates for enabling the user to access encrypted resources, the capability to order products over the Internet, the ability to order a corporate credit card, access to financial services providers, and the like. In-addition, users may be provisioned with "hard" resources such as telephones, computers, cellular telephones, pagers, personal digital assistants, desks, chairs, file cabinets, other physical components, and the like. In addition, a user may be provisioned with resource bundles.